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FOR NEA/ARP LONNIE KELLEY, NEA/I, NEA/IPA, DRL

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [CVIS](#) [MASS](#) [KPAL](#) [EAID](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#) [KU](#)
SUBJECT: (S) FOREIGN MINISTER ON PM VISIT: IRAQ, IRAN,
GTMO, AND VISAS

REF: A. STATE 93939
[1](#)B. STATE 91327

Classified By: The Ambassador for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: During a September 2 meeting with Ambassador, Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Dr. Mohammed Sabah al-Salem Al Sabah said Kuwait's Prime Minister during his September 18-19 visit expects to raise Kuwaiti's 4 remaining GTMO detainees, regional security issues, a Free Trade Agreement, and Kuwaiti student visa and port of entry problems. Ambassador noted we would honor the deep security relationship, acknowledge Kuwaiti support for shared regional objectives and seek to improve our counter terrorism cooperation. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) The Ambassador met at length September 2 with Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Dr. Mohammed Al Sabah prior to the latter's departure for a Gulf Cooperation Council Foreign Minister's meeting in Jeddah. The FM told Ambassador that Prime Minister Shaykh Nasser al-Mohammed al-Ahmed al-Jaber Al Sabah would likely raise issues related to regional security, Kuwait's Guantanamo detainees, counter-terrorism cooperation, U.S. visa and entry difficulties for Kuwaitis, and a possible Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the U.S. during his September 18-19 visit to the Washington. The Ambassador counseled the FM to advise the PM to be nuanced in his discussion of a FTA in the near term stating that there was no possibility of reaching an agreement at this time.

Regional Security) Iran and Iraq

[1](#)3. (C) On Iran, the FM said the PM would seek clarification of the P5 1 Incentives Package for Iran, and particularly its acknowledgment of a "legitimate" regional security role for Iran. The FM noted pointedly that no one in the P5 group had consulted with the GCC states prior to presenting this formulation, and added that the Secretary's meeting with GCC representatives and U/S Burns in Abu Dhabi had not provided sufficient clarity on this point.

[1](#)4. (C) On Iraq, the FM sought details concerning our ongoing Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) negotiations. Ambassador acknowledged both sides had been grappling with PM Maliki's need to assert his nationalist credentials but assured the FM there would be no sudden withdrawal of all U.S. forces. (Note: The GOK is following closely reports the GOI is failing to integrate Sunni "Sahwa" fighters into Iraq's national security forces. End Note.) The FM reaffirmed that Kuwait's long-standing ambassadorial nominee, General Ali Moumin, would present his formal credentials in October, but expressed concern over Baghdad's lack of reciprocity. Ambassador noted we had pressed the Iraqis to expedite the process. The FM added that this foot dragging by the GOI,

combined with "troublesome" statements by GOI officials regarding Iraq-Kuwait border issues -- including, he said, "dismissive" remarks by PM Maliki during the latter's April visit to Kuwait about Iraqi farmers encroaching on Kuwaiti property: "What's a few meters here or there?" -- combined with reports of surplus Iraqi oil revenues garnering interest in New York banks, made it extremely difficult for the GOK to consider asking its parliament to forgive Iraq's publicly held debt.

15. (S) In this regard, Ambassador took the opportunity to brief the FM on the Iraq Security Force Transition Plan and associated arms sales, noting that the plan's goal was to strengthen Iraq's counter insurgency capability (ref B). The FM asked specifically regarding tank numbers but expressed no objection.

Counter-terrorism Cooperation and Guantanamo

16. (S/NF) The FM confirmed the PM would raise with Washington interlocutors Kuwait's four remaining GTMO detainees. Ambassador noted any transfer of detainees would be difficult if not impossible given the almost certain involvement of a former Kuwaiti detainee in a May suicide bombing in Mosul, despite prior GOK assurances it would monitor and mitigate any such activity. Ambassador cited a recent episode illustrative of Kuwait State Security compartmentalization and stressed the need for greater transparency and timeliness in our CT cooperation. FM replied there clearly was more work to be done as he'd heard similar complaints from the Kuwaiti side regarding inadequate information exchange.

17. (S/NF) Ambassador noted ongoing U.S. concerns about terror financing, apart from our stated concerns over the Revival of Islamic Heritage (RIHS) charitable foundation. Ambassador specifically named Mohammed Al-Dosary as a case in point: We had drawn to the GOK's attention on various occasions Al-Dosary's interactions with a known Syrian foreign fighter facilitator to no apparent avail. Individuals such as Mubarak Al-Bathali, Hamad Al-Ali and Jaber Al-Jalahmah had finally been designated by the GOK, but only following the embarrassment of the Mosul bombing. The FM asserted that the GOK was indeed attempting to track down Al-Dosary and shared our concerns. With regard to other designations, the FM dismissed Al-Bathali as a "crackpot" who obtained unwarranted notoriety through our designation; he acknowledged the GOK had engaged conservative members of parliament on the other two, who clearly had been involved in the financing of jihadists. Ambassador underscored the importance of the GOK enacting a strong anti-terror financing law to enable Kuwait to act effectively against this mutual threat. She acknowledged parliamentary challenges but stressed the importance of quick executive branch action and movement of the current draft law to parliament for a vote.

Visa complaints

18. (SBU) The FM said he received "tons of complaints" about delays in issuing visas and in multi-hour delays at ports of entry in the U.S. He cited the local belief that Kuwaitis were being "singled out" for discretionary "pullouts" at points of entry, suggesting that other Gulf nationals were not being similarly detained. He remarked that his nephew is pulled out of line and detained for 2-3 hours every time that he travels to the U.S. The Ambassador responded by suggesting that this was a good opportunity for the PM to follow-up on Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff's March visit to Kuwait, to explore the possibility of Kuwait's participation in a pre-clearance "pilot program" for Kuwaiti students.

Palestinian Support

¶9. (SBU) Ambassador thanked the FM for Kuwait's financial support for the Palestinian Authority, including the recent USD 80 million disbursement through the World Bank's trust fund, and encouraged continued Kuwaiti support (ref A). In response to Ambassador's query, the FM stated that the remainder of Kuwait's USD 300 million pledge would be disbursed over 3 years through several mechanisms, including the World Bank, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and the Islamic Development Bank.

Other Issues

¶10. (SBU) Ambassador raised ongoing Kuwaiti labor problems noting that the alleged beatings of protesting expatriate laborers would be mentioned in the annual U.S. Human Rights Report. The FM responded that the Bangladeshi Foreign Minister would be visiting Kuwait the following day for serious discussions on ways forward on the issue, including how to proceed against middlemen in the labor procurement process. Ambassador reiterated our concern that the laborers be treated humanely and that no national group be singled out for mass deportations.

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